



MEDIA RELEASE

PUBLIC LIBRARIES BENEFIT FROM GENEROUS WOMEN'S FUND GIFT

Early Learning Stations To Be Installed at Central and Branch Libraries

Santa Barbara, CA May 29, 2012

The Friends of the Santa Barbara Public Library received \$65,000 from the Women's Fund of Santa Barbara to expand the number of Early Literacy touch-screen computer stations available in the library system from 2 to 19. The new educational computers for young children will be installed in the Goleta, Eastside, Montecito, Carpinteria, and Central libraries this year.

The Early Literacy computers from AWE (Advanced Workstations in Education) have child-friendly menus, about 30 English & 30 Spanish learning games, touch-screens, and colorful keyboards. Eleven Early Literacy stations will be added, and 6 AfterSchool Edge netbooks will also be purchased. The Central Library has had two Early Literacy stations in the children's area for over a year, and they are very popular with children and their caregivers. The AfterSchool Edge netbooks have 50 educational titles that appeal to 6-14 years old.

"Children will have access to engaging and research-proven technology that promotes early literacy and school readiness," library director Irene Macias said. "Kids really love these literacy stations, and it's incredible to watch them explore science, art, math, and stories without needing special training or instruction. When a mother who comes in to the library for adult literacy tutoring for basic English reading looks over and smiles at her young children, who are focusing and learning on the Early Literacy stations next to her, we know that something great is happening."

The gift, which was presented to the Friends of the Santa Barbara Public Library at their annual members' tea on May 16, will cover the cost of purchasing 17 computers with research-tested software, upgrades, new release licenses and warranties for the next five years. "The Library System deeply appreciates this gift from the Women's Fund, as it will benefit many children throughout our community, enabling them to develop critical reading and computer literacy skills," said Macias.

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